

2004 CPG

COMPREHENSIVE
PROCUREMENT
GUIDELINES

PAPER



Buying recycled products...

- ...conserves natural resources
- ...saves energy
- ...reduces solid waste
- ...reduces air and water pollutants
- ...reduces greenhouse gases
- ...creates new jobs



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Buy-Recycled Series

PAPER PRODUCTS

Ten years ago, very little recycled-content printing and writing paper existed. Now, it's readily available, along with recycled-content newsprint, paper towels, and corrugated packaging—and at higher quality and more competitive prices than ever before. That's in part due to

government initiatives since 1988, when the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the Procurement Guideline for Paper and Paper Products Containing Recovered Materials. The 1988 paper guideline's buy-recycled requirements are now part of EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG).

To make it easier to buy recycled, the EPA updates the CPG every 2 years. Through the CPG, EPA designates items that must contain recycled materials when purchased with appropriated federal funds by federal, state, and local agencies, or by government contractors.

Among these items, EPA has designated 5 types of paper products made from recovered materials. EPA's research shows that the items desig-

nated in the CPG are of high quality, widely available, and cost-competitive with virgin products. EPA also issues nonregulatory companion guidance—the Recovered Materials Advisory Notice (RMAN)—that recommends levels of recycled content for these items.

Why Buy Recycled?

Recycling is more than just dropping off your cans, bottles, and newspapers at the curb or at a local collection facility. Diverting recyclables from the waste stream is only the first of three steps in the recycling process. The second step occurs when companies use these recyclables to manufacture new products. The third step comes when you purchase products made from recovered materials. That's how we close the loop.

Buying recycled products results in many environmental benefits. It supports local recycling programs by creating markets for the collected materials that are processed and used to manufacture new products. This creates jobs and helps strengthen the economy; conserves natural resources; saves energy; and reduces solid waste, air and water pollutants, and greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

What is CPG?

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requires procuring agencies to buy recycled-content products designated by EPA in the CPG. Issued in May 1995, the first CPG designated 19 new products and incorporated five previously designated items (including paper and paper products) in eight product categories. Paper RMAN I was published in May 1996. Paper RMAN II, which superseded the previous Paper RMAN, was published in June 1998. The first CPG update (CPG II) was published in November 1997. The second CPG update (CPG III) was published in January 2000, and the third CPG update (CPG IV) was published in April 2004. No new paper products were designated in any of the updates.

Procuring agencies include all federal agencies, and any state or local government agencies or government contractors that use appropriated federal funds to purchase the designated items. If your agency spends more than \$10,000 per year on a product designated in the CPG, you are required to purchase it with the highest recycled-content level practicable. The CPG also applies to lease contracts covering designated items. Executive Order 13101 and the Federal Acquisition Regulation also call for an increase in the federal government's use of

recycled-content and environmentally preferable products.

Once any new items are designated in a published CPG update, an agency has 1 year to develop an affirmative procurement program (or revise an existing one) to include these new items. By June 22, 1989, agencies were required to develop affirmative procurement programs to incorporate buy-recycled requirements for paper and paper products. Since CPG IV designates no new paper products, agencies are not required to revise this portion of their affirmative procurement program.

The CPG acknowledges that specific circumstances might arise that preclude the purchase of products made with recovered materials. Your agency may purchase designated items that do not contain recovered materials if it determines that: 1) the price of a given designated item made with recovered materials is unreasonably high, 2) there is inadequate competition (not enough sources of supply), 3) unusual and unreasonable delays would result from obtaining the item, or 4) the recycled-content item does not meet the agency's reasonable performance specifications.

How Do I Purchase Recycled-Content Paper Products?

The Paper Products RMAN II recommends recycled-content levels that you can look for when purchasing paper products, as shown in the table on the following pages. Use EPA's RMAN recommendations as a starting point. The recommendations are based on market research used to identify recycled-content products that are commercially available. The RMANs also provide other purchasing guidance. Please refer to <www.epa.gov/cpg/products.htm> for more information on individual products.

Rather than specifying just one level of recycled content, the RMAN recommends ranges for many paper products, which reflect what is currently available in the United States. The recycled content of paper products varies; therefore, you should contact local paper mills or merchants to determine product availability. Try to purchase paper containing the highest content that is available to you.

When buying paper other than printing and writing paper, specify that you want paper "containing X percent recovered fiber, including Y percent post-consumer fiber." (For most printing and writing papers, you can simply say you're looking for 30 percent postconsumer content.)

In addition, make sure you measure recovered and postconsumer fiber content as a percentage of the weight of all fiber in the paper, not as a percentage of the total weight of the sheet. (The total weight also includes the weight of dyes, fillers, and water used in the manufacturing process.)

Access EPA's online recycled-content products database by going to <www.epa.gov/cpg> and selecting "Supplier Database." See the last section of this fact sheet for other helpful resources.

Key Terms

Before buying recycled-content paper products meeting EPA's recommendations, you'll need to understand some important terms.

Postconsumer fiber:

- Is the paper recovered in our homes and offices.
- Does not include newsstand returns and printers' overruns.

Recovered fiber:

- Includes scrap generated at mills after the end of the papermaking process; converting and printing scrap; newsstand returns and printers' overruns; obsolete inventory of mills, printers, and others; damaged stock; and postconsumer fiber.
- Is not waste. EPA has replaced the term waste paper used in the 1988 guidelines with recovered fiber, to acknowledge that this material is a valuable resource.
- Must be repulped. Paper cannot simply be re-cut or repackaged to count as recovered-content paper.
- Does not include forest residues such as sawdust and wood chips from forestry operations.

Mill broke:

- Is scrap generated in a mill prior to the completion of the papermaking process.
- EPA recommends that you allow mills to count the recycled-content portion of mill broke. You should not count the nonrecycled-content portion, however.

EPA's Recommended Content Levels for Paper Products

ITEM	NOTES	POSTCONSUMER RECOVERED FIBER	TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER
Printing and Writing Papers			
Reprographic	Business papers such as bond, electrostatic, copy, mimeo, duplicator, and reproduction	30%	30%
Offset	Used for book publishing, commercial printing direct mail, technical documents, and manuals	30%	30%
Tablet	Office paper such as note pads and notebooks	30%	30%
Forms Bond	Bond type papers used for business forms such as continuous, cash register, sales book, unit sets, and computer printout, excluding carbonless	30%	30%
Envelope	Wove Kraft, white, and colored (including manilla) Kraft, unbleached Excludes custom envelopes	30% 10-20% 10%	30% 10-20% 10%
Cotton Fiber	High-quality papers used for stationary, invitations, currency, ledgers, maps, and other specialty items	30%	30%
Text and Cover	Premium papers used for cover stock, books and stationary and matching envelopes	30%	30%
Supercalendered	Groundwood paper used for advertising and mail order inserts, catalogs, and some magazines	10%	10%
Machine Finished Groundwood	Groundwood paper used in magazines and catalogs	10%	10%
Papeteries	Used for invitations and greeting cards	30%	30%
Check Safety	Used in the manufacture of commercial and government checks	10%	10%
Coated	Used for annual reports, posters, brochures, and magazines. Have gloss, dull, or matte finishes	10%	10%
Carbonless	Used for multiple-impact copy forms	30%	30%
File Folders	Manilla or colored	30%	30%
Dyed Filing Products	Used for multicolored hanging folders and wallet files	20%	20-50%
Index and Card Stock	Used for index cards and postcards	20%	50%

ITEM	NOTES	POSTCONSUMER RECOVERED FIBER	TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER
Pressboard	High-strength paperboard used in binders and report covers	50%	20%
Tags and Tickets	Used for toll and lottery tickets, licences, and identification and tabulating cards	20%	20-50%
Newsprint			
Newsprint	Groundwood paper used in newspapers	20-85%	20-100%
Commercial Sanitary Tissue Products			
Bathroom Tissue	Used in rolls or sheets	20-60%	20-100%
Paper Towels	Used rolls or sheets	40-60%	40-100%
Paper Napkins	Used in food service applications	30-60%	30-100%
Facial Tissue	Used for personal care	10-15%	10-100%
General-purpose Industrial Wipers	Used in cleaning and wiping applications	40%	40-100%
Paperboard and Packaging Products			
Corrugated Containers	Used for packaging and shipping a variety of goods (<300 psi) (300 psi)	25-50% 25-30%	25-50% 25-30%
Solid Fiber Boxes	Used for specialized packaging needs such dynamite packaging and army ration boxes	40%	40%
Folding Cartons	Used to package a wide variety of foods, household products, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, detergent, and hardware	40-80%	100%
Industrial Paperboard	Used to create tubes, cores, cans, and drums	45-100%	100%
Miscellaneous	Includes "chipboard" pad backings, book covers covered binders, mailing tubes, game boards, and puzzles	75-100%	90-100%
Padded Mailers	Made from Kraft paper that is usually brown but can be bleached white	5-15%	5-15%
Carrierboard	A type of folding carton designed for multipack beverage cartons	10-15%	10-100%
Brown Papers	Used for bags and wrapping paper	5-20%	5-40%
Miscellaneous Paper Products			
Tray Liners	Used to line food service trays. Often contain printed information	50-75%	100%

Paper Buying Tips

To make it even easier to buy recycled-content paper products, EPA offers the following purchasing tips for the various paper product categories outlined in the RMAN.

Printing and writing papers comprise one of the largest categories of paper and paper products. Examples include stationery, computer printout paper, note pads, copier paper, and offset paper. Printing and writing papers can be uncoated or coated.

When buying printing and writing paper, remember to:

- Work with your printer. Different papers exhibit differences in performance and printability. Some printers might first want to test certain papers with a particular ink. Printers also can help you select papers based on how they will be used (i.e., whether they will be folded, die-cut, or made into self-mailers).
- Work with your graphic designer. Some papers are better than others for certain design needs. Make sure both the designer and printer agree that the paper you choose will meet your expectations.
- Consider the environmental ramifications of your purchasing decisions. Papers with certain characteristics, such as deep colors, coatings, or groundwood content, might not be recyclable in your existing office paper recycling program or might require changes to the program. Consider the effects of your paper purchases before deciding to purchase a specific paper.

Newsprint is a type of groundwood paper generally used to print newspapers. Recycled-content newsprint is usually manufactured from fiber recovered from old newspapers and magazines. The federal government uses newsprint for printing the Federal Register, Congressional Record, and other publications.

When purchasing newsprint, consider these helpful hints:

- Pay attention to newsprint's basis weight. Basis weight is the weight in pounds of a ream of paper cut to a specified size. Different weights hold up better in different presses. Recycled-content newsprint ranging from 25 to 32 pounds generally performs well. The U.S. Government Printing Office specifies 28 pound recycled-content newsprint.
- Consider your requirements for the newsprint you're buying. Recycled-content newsprint manufacturers are making products that meet their clients' perfor-

mance requirements (e.g., print-ability, brightness, cleanliness, and opacity).

- Determine whether newsprint is recyclable in your existing recycling program. Some office paper recycling programs do not accept groundwood papers such as newsprint; find out whether yours does before you buy newsprint.

Sanitary tissue products include bathroom and facial tissue, paper towels, napkins, and general-purpose industrial wipers. When purchasing these products remember these tips:

- Avoid misconceptions about softness, absorbency, and strength. Some recycled-content sanitary tissue products are softer, stronger, and more absorbent than others. Consider your aesthetic and functional requirements for tissue products before purchasing a specific product.
- Remember to review your janitorial supply contracts because commercial tissue products are often purchased through contractors. Make sure your supply contracts specify recycled-content, not virgin, products.
- When changing brands, consider other factors that could influence your purchasing decision. When switching from sheet to roll paper towels, for example, you might incur costs to replace dispensers or fixtures if such costs are not borne by the supplier.

Paperboard and packaging is a broad category of paper products that includes corrugated containers, folding cartons, book and report covers, mailing tubes, video cassette boxes, paper bags, and wrapping paper. They can be manufactured with a wide variety of recovered fibers including old newspapers, old corrugated containers, mixed papers, and sorted white office paper. In fact, paperboard mills use more recovered fiber than any other segment of the paper industry.

When purchasing recycled-content paperboard and packaging consider these tips:

- Remember, you can print on recycled boxes, not just on virgin, bleached boxes.
- Be aware that you can use recycled boxes in food applications and still meet Food and Drug Administration requirements.



How Do I Get More Information?



Information Available From EPA

This fact sheet and the following publications on buying recycled-content products can be accessed in electronic format on the Internet.

- **EPA Expands Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG).** This fact sheet provides general information about the CPG and the development of affirmative procurement programs. See www.epa.gov/cpg/pdf/cpg-fs.pdf.
- **Federal Register (FR)** notices promulgating CPG I (60 FR 21370/EPA530-Z-95-006) and RMAN I (60 FR 21386/EPA530-Z-95-007), May 1, 1995, and Paper Products RMAN I (60 FR 26986/EPA530-Z-96-005), May 29, 1996. FR notices promulgating CPG II (62 FR 60961/EPA530-Z-97-009) and RMAN II (62 FR 60975/EPA530-Z-97-010), November 13, 1997, and the Paper Products RMAN II (63 FR 31214), June 8, 1998. FR notices promulgating CPG III (65 FR 3070) and RMAN III (65 FR 3082), January 19, 2000. FR notices promulgating CPG IV (69 FR 24028) and RMAN IV (69 FR 24039), April 30, 2004. See www.epa.gov/cpg/backgrnd.htm.



Other Sources of Information

- **U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).** GSA's Environmental Products Guide contains more than 1,500 paper and paper products containing recovered materials. To view an electronic version of the guide, visit www.gsa.gov/attachments/GSA_PUBLICATIONS/pub/epsg2002_3_1.pdf.
- **U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO).** GPO provides a variety of recycled-content printing papers to federal agencies. To view federal government paper specification standards see the GPO Web site at www.access.gpo.gov/qualitycontrol/paperspecs/index.html. For more information about papers available from GPO, contact the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. Phone: 202 512-1800 or 866 512-1800 (toll free). Fax: 202 512-2250 or 877 471-3258.
- **The Official Recycled Products Guide.** This directory lists more than 5,000 manufacturers and distributors of recycled-content products. For more information, contact the Recycling Data Management Corp., P.O. Box 577, Ogdensburg, NY 13669. Phone: 800 267-0707.

